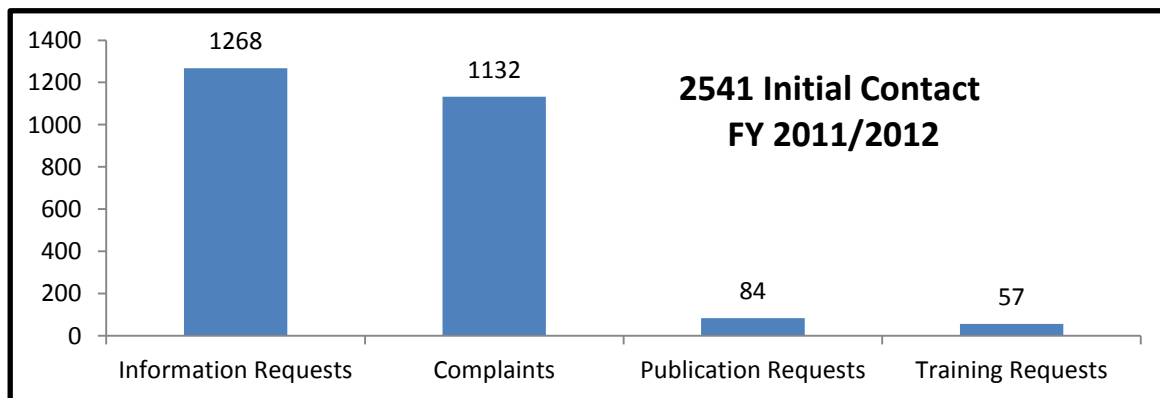


California Fiscal Year 2011-2012 Foster Care Ombudsman Data Summary

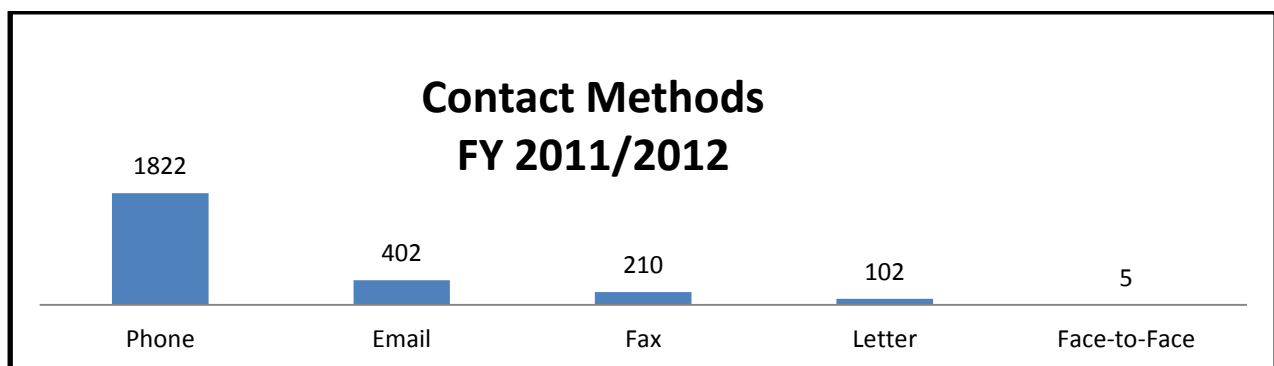
2,541 Initial Contacts

The FCO received 2,541 initial contacts during FY 2011/2012. Each contact is an opportunity for the FCO to respond to the concerns impacting the foster care population and gather information to identify recurring issues in California's foster care system.



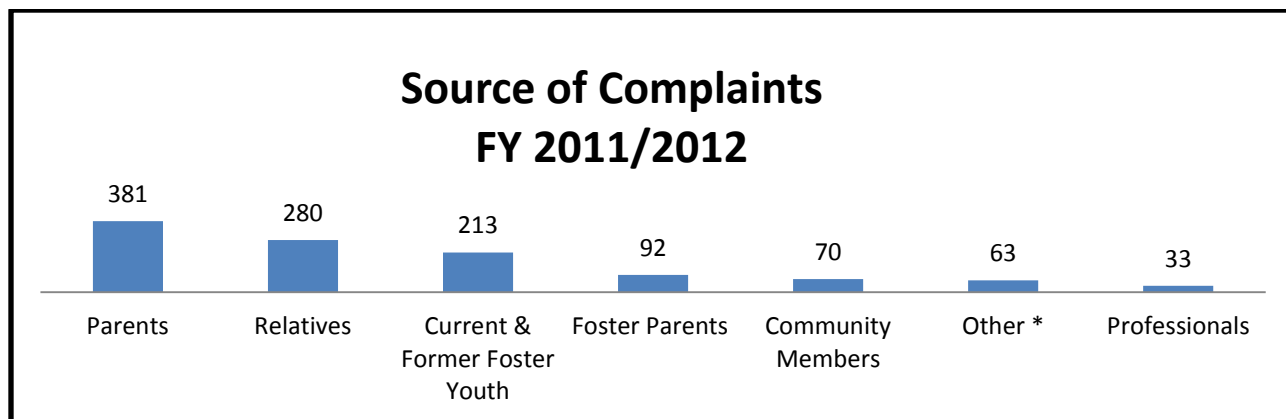
Methods of Initial Contact

Telephone calls and emails are the predominant means of contacting the FCO. However, as the graph below demonstrates, other methods of contact are used.



Complaints by Source

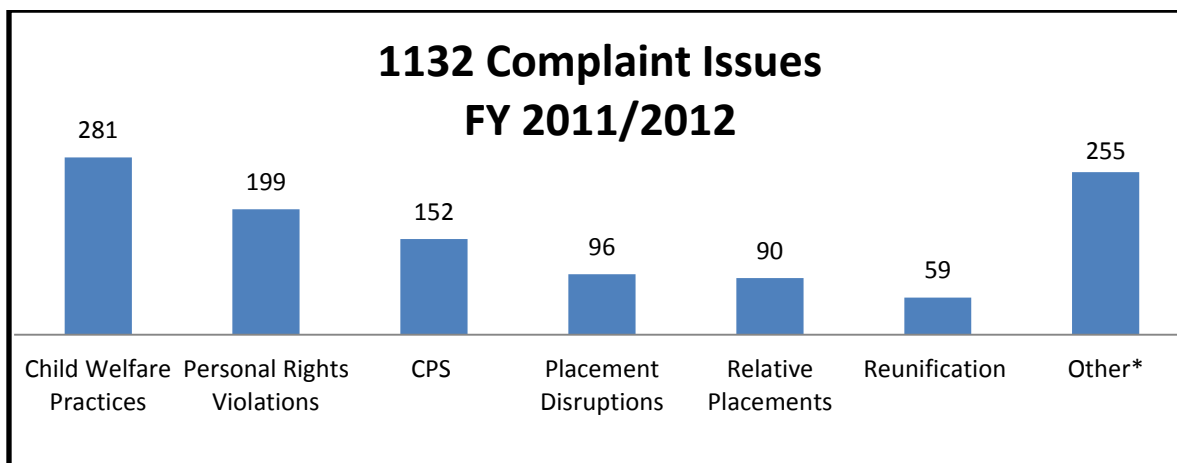
The FCO keeps track of who calls to make complaints regarding the children and youth in the California foster care system. Regarding the 1,132 complaints received by the FCO during FY 2011-2012, the chart below identifies the caller.



Other* Includes Guardian (12), Adoptive Parent (10), Attorney (10), CWS Staff (8), FFA (5), Prospective Adoptive Parent (5) Prospective Foster Parent (5), Group Home (3), CASA (2), Legislative Staff (2), ILP Staff (1).

Most Frequently Received Complaint Issues

Throughout FY 2011/2012 the FCO received 1,132 complaints. The six most frequent complaint issues were about child welfare practices, personal rights violations, Child Protective Services (CPS), placement disruption, relative placement, and reunification.



Other* complaint issues include: Visitation (44), Foster care payments (42), Unknown (25), Non-foster care issues (20), Adoption (18), Removal from birth parents (18), Foster/kin care services (13), Homelessness (13), Licensing (11), Emancipation (11), Independent Living Program (ILP) (7), Medical and dental care (8), Court (4), Interstate Compact Placement of Children (ICPC) (3), Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) (3), Mental health services (3), Higher education (3), Criminal Background Exemption (2), Family Finding (2), Discrimination (2), Attorney (2), and AB 12 Extended Foster Care (1).

Personal Rights Violation Complaints

In FY 2011/2012 a total of 199 personal rights violation complaints were filed with the FCO. The chart below indicates the six most frequent complaints regarding violations of the rights of children and youth in foster care. Personal rights complaints continue to be one of the highest categories of complaints received by the FCO.



Other personal rights violations are: Telephone calls and mail (8), Attend Religious services (6), education (4), Attend ILP classes (3), Free from unreasonable searches of personal belongings (3), Other (8), Confidential juvenile court records (2), Attend court hearings and speak to the judge (1), Have storage space (1), Receive an allowance (1), Work and develop job skills (1)

1,268 Requests for Information

During FY 2011/2012 the FCO received 1,268 requests for information. Individuals who call the FCO are as diverse as California's population. People call for information on the child welfare system, foster care or children's issues in general. Many requests for information are received by email through the CDSS and the Children and Family Services Division website.

Some examples of information requests include:

- ❖ County Eligibility Worker needs a child's MediCal coverage changed
- ❖ Out-of-state Child Welfare Services Department needs a child welfare background check.
- ❖ How to become a foster parent.
- ❖ How to get into transitional housing for current and former foster youth.

- ❖ What college opportunities are available for former foster youth.
- ❖ How to adopt a child in foster care.
- ❖ How to find siblings that were adopted.
- ❖ The location of services for teenagers with behavioral problems.
- ❖ Requests for child welfare statistical data.

All callers are provided with appropriate information and referrals to other agencies. The FCO provides the highest level of customer service possible.

57 Trainings

During FY 2011/2012 the FCO provided trainings to statewide and county stakeholders. The hosts for these trainings included organizations such as: the California Youth Connection Policy Conference, Child Welfare Director's Association, the Judicial Council, the United States Ombudsman Association, various foster parents associations, Foster Family Agency Conference, and Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA). The FCO is committed to providing education and information on the foster care system, and, more specifically, on the rights of children and youth in California foster care.

31,425 Publications

During FY 2011/2012, the FCO distributed more than 31,425 publications. The FCO received 84 calls requesting publications and materials that educate the statewide community regarding the rights of children in out-of-home care, the child welfare system and the supportive services and resources available for foster children, youth, their families and caretakers.

Publications disseminated by the FCO include brochures on the Foster Care Ombudsman Office, Foster Youth Rights (in English and Spanish), College Financial Aid, Help-Line Cards; and Foster Youth Rights posters (in English and Spanish). In addition to these publications, the FCO distributes a Resource Directory and information packets.

